

ISSUE 34

The Monthly Magazine of Cult Television £1.65

US \$3.75
CAN \$4.50



SECRET SERVICE

Videos to be won

BRENT SPINER

STAR
TREK's
Data

Louise
Jameson,

DOCTOR WHO

Companion
LEELA

Gene
Roddenberry's

THE QUESTOR TAPES

More from
GERRY ANDERSON
and TERRY NATION
about their creations

QUANTUM LEAP

Season 2 EPISODE GUIDE completed





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Louise Jameson and Tim Bower © British Press

Blake's 7: M. 22 © BBC/ITV

Editorial

The amount of programmes on the air relevant to *TV Zone* readers this summer has been small, but maybe that's just as well. All the money needed for blank video tapes will have very probably been put aside — for a short time! — to pay for the very large number of video releases. The monthly bill for anyone who buys *all* the released tapes must be horrendous. But keep saving, there's going to be lots more on video and television. Too much of a good thing? (No!) I've caught some of BBC's **Virtual Murder**, and unlike some of the readers who've written about it, I found it rather superficial. Good direction, yes, but somehow there's no atmosphere to the series, almost dull. I wonder why... The next issue will be published 24th September.

Jan Vincent-Rudski

TV Zone issue 34 September 1992. ISSN: 0957-3844. Editor Jan Vincent-Rudski. Assistant Editor David Richardson. Production Assistants Nicholas Briggs, Deanne Holding. Contributors Mark Chappell, Stuart Clark, Mark French, Richard Houldsworth, Dominic May, Joe Nazzaro, James Phillips, Rod Summers, Graeme Wood, with thanks to Mark Dickson. Publisher Stephen Payne. Editorial Address: **TV Zone, Visual Imagination Limited, PO Box 371, London SW14 5JL**. Fax: 081 878 9455. All letters, articles and photographs for possible publication are welcome. We will return items if an SAE is included but no responsibility can be undertaken for loss or damage. For subscription information see back cover. Advertising rates on application to the Editorial Address or telephone 081 878 5486 and ask for TV Zone adverts. Distribution: Comag, Tavistock Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7QE. Tel: 0995 444055. Printed by Capricorn Group plc.

Front Cover: Brent Spiner as Data in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*



Compiled by Dominic May and
Stuart Clark

Encore

Channel 4 begins the 25th anniversary screening of **The Prisoner** on Wednesday, 23rd Sept at 11.15pm. 18 slots have been reserved, allowing for a showing of the 'alternate' version of *The Chimes of Big Ben*. Unscreened in the UK, this is a rough cut, including different theme music and an extra scene. Transmission must wait for all rights to be obtained.

Channel 4 contacted *TV Zone* to assure readers that *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* will be shown to its conclusion. On BBC2, both *The Addams Family* (7th Sept to Christmas) and *Quantum Leap* (Nov) will return. The BBC will finally show the four 'banned' episodes.

Stingray is definite for Autumn, and *Captain Scarlet* is probable. *Doctor Who* is due to return the first week of September with the re-coloured version of *The Demons*, followed by stories from the remaining Doctors in a

21-week slot. Heavily under consideration is *Pyramids of Mars*, which is available on video, but in a very edited form. The newly re-coloured version of *Terror of the Autons* may be shown at the NFT around Christmas. The Late Show department responsible for the *Who* reruns and the re-colouring has been retitled the BBC Archive Unit. Janet Street-Porter's Youth Department is believed to have purchased compilations of US tv's *Wayne's World*.

TV Hell

August Bank Holiday Monday on BBC2 finds the BBC Archive Unit providing an evening of the 'worst' of British tv. Angus Deayton and Paul Merton host *TV Hell*, originally planned for June. Treats include a Worst of the Eurovision Song Contest compilation, *Bottom of the Pops* and the first episode of *Triangle*.

Audience

Having built an audience, BBC2 took off another successful Fantasy show, this time *Quantum Leap*, which by the beginning of July had increased its audience share to 27% achieving over 5.5 million viewers in mid-Summer. *Leap* had topped the BBC2 chart for three weeks consecutively, only prevented a fourth time by Wimbledon. *Red Dwarf*

IV repeats averaged 4 million (20%) and also increased the audience during its six weeks. *Northern Exposure* continued around the 2m mark as did *Voyage...*, while *The Crystal Maze* captured up to 5.07m (23%). *Night Stalker* has been relatively successful with 1.98m. On BSkyB, *The Flash* dropped to 0.32m. Granada's one-off *Angels* reached 8.13m and 28th overall in the viewing chart. Series petering out included *The Addams Family* (2m), *Amazing Stories* (under 3.4m), *Television's Greatest Hits* (5.1m) and the Sunday afternoon screening of *Star Trek III* could only muster 4.5m. The BBC plans to release its previously confidential Appreciation Index data, which measures an audience's enjoyment of programmes, much to the chagrin of the ITV companies, who would not wish advertisers to see low AIs for highly rated programmes.

Video

From ITC Video: Sept 14th, *The Secret Service* 1&2, *The Persuaders* 5&6; Sept 28th, *Tiswas* 2; Oct 12th, *Space: 1999* 7&8, *BBC Video updates...* *Red Dwarf IV* now spread over two months, *Cannille* in Oct and *Dimension Jump* in Nov. The three previously unspecified *Who* stories for late '93 are provisionally *The Chase* (Hartnell), *The Curse of Peladon* (Pertwee) and *Remembrance of the Daleks* (McCoys), while *The Twin Dilemma* should lose its Woolworths exclusivity. Other '93 titles previously published still hold, but are of course subject to change. Plans to release *Who* documentaries are still under consideration. Sales of *Shada* stood at 14,000 after one week, a sound result considering the £19.99 price tag. On audio, both *The Macra Terror* and *The Evil of the Daleks* reached the lower levels of the UK top 100 and have sold more than any previous BBC Radio/Audio Collection release. Additions to *The Missing Stories* collection are likely, but John Nathan-Turner is not expected to be involved.

Books

Two new Virgin *Doctor Who* New Adventures have been commissioned for June and July 1993, *White Darkness* (voodoo

zombies) by David McIntee and *Shadowmind* (pure SF) by Chris Bulis. Editor Peter Davill-Evans now has a dozen further usable manuscripts. Novels will be 'stand alone' until November '93, when a new four-part series instigated by Paul Cornell will start, dealing with an alternative universe involving someone tampering with the Doctor's past. John Peel's adaptations of *Power...* and *Evil of the Daleks* are now set for May and June 1993 respectively. Reprints of old *Who* novels for early '93: *January — The Twin Dilemma/Vengeance On Varos*; February — *The Sanguislers/The Tenth Planet*; March — *Terror of the Zygons/Pyramids of Mars* (*The Red Dwarf Programme Guide* has slipped to March); April — *Meglos/The Face of Evil*. *Doctor Who — Classic Comics*, reprinting various past 1964 comic strips, is launched by Marvel Comics this November. A possible volume by Paul Mesurier (Paul Smith of Media-hand) on the *Who* girls hangs in the balance.

Titan Books has set 22nd Oct as the publication date for *The Official Red Dwarf Companion* by Bruce Dessau, a full colour 96 page photographic large format softcover retailing at £6.99, with an introduction by Grant and Naylor. Cross-promotion with BBC's *Red Dwarf IV* video releases and Penguin's anthology of the two previously released Grant/Naylor novelizations is expected. Titan has provisionally scheduled two further *Doctor Who* Script Books for 1993 with *The Power of the Daleks* in March arriving before Virgin's novelization plus *Ghost Light* in April, the month will also see the first UK publication of Sondra Marshak and Myrna Curbreath's *Star Trek Lives*.

Ex Archives

A new agreement between the BBC and Equity paves the way for the BBC to increase the use of its archive. Repeat royalties for both daytime (until 6pm weekdays, 4pm weekends/bank holidays) and late night (after 10.30pm) programming older than 30 months are being reduced by 50% compared with peaktime costs enabling both BBC channels to screen additional out of time series. Previously repeats of *Poldark* and *The Onedin Line* did occasionally surface on daytime, but funds

Preparations are being made for the transmission of
The Prisoner on Channel 4

Photo courtesy Channel 4





The very witty and clever homage to tv of the 60s, *The TEEN People*, is returning to London from Sept 8th to 26th. Difficult to describe, the play is worth an evening out. (Venue: 'The Man in the Moon', King's Road) Photo © New Outlook

were never available to pay for more than one series. The new deal means that vintage programming with larger casts could now be shown. Equity consented to the arrangement, because fewer imported series and feature films are expected to be screened, thus increasing overall royalties paid to British actors. The BBC Enterprises/Thames backed satellite venture UK Gold is still expected to begin transmission in October, subject to a formalized agreement with Equity. Programming plans currently being finalized are now expected to include vintage *Doctor Who* on a daily basis. In the light of increased competition from BSkyB and UK Gold, ITV plans to launch up to two satellite services, one of which would be general entertainment offering re-runs described as similar to UK Gold, but "much better quality".

Animation

\$5.2 million is being spent on producing 13 animated episodes of *X-Men* for screening on the Fox Children's Network in the US and for release in the UK on video by Polygram. ITV has scheduled *Astro Farm* from 11th Sept (3.55 pm), a 13 episode production about an Outer Space farm, where anything can be grown and the weather is controlled.

Central Television's *The Mr Bogus Show* will be shown on ITV next year. Produced using both cel animation and claymation, the first series has already topped the children's charts in New York and Los Angeles. A second series will be screened in the US this autumn with a daily strip in 1993. Fairwater Films and Mark It Film and Video are undertaking 26 11-minute episodes of *Things That Go Bump in the Night* and 13 10-minute editions of *The Wiggles* respectively. Shanghai TV has produced *Robotech*, an animated series it intends to market worldwide with the help of US-based Nanuet Entertainment.

Coming Soon

A five week run of *The Tomorrow People* (with a re-shot version of the pilot) has been provisionally scheduled on ITV from Wednesday, 25th Nov (4.40pm). Recording of the story, written and produced by Roger Price, begins shortly. The BBC has commissioned a series based on Mary Norton's *The Borrowers*. The story concerns little people who live underneath the floorboards. Paul Moonlight Stone is the BBC's executive producer, the director is John Henderson and the screenplay has been adapted by Richard Catwaele/Robin of

Sherwood Carpenter. The cast includes Ian Holm, Penelope Wilton and Sian Phillips. Six episodes, all on film, will be completed by the end of August and screened in the late autumn on BBC1 (Sunday?).

Writer Russell T Davies's *Century Falls* (see the letters pages) goes into production in September for BBC1 in the New Year. The director is Colin Cant and the producer Richard Callanan. The Children's Film Unit has been on location in Suffolk shooting *Emily's Ghost*, an 80-minute Edwardian supernatural story for a Channel 4 Christmas 1993 screening. The cast includes Martin Jarvis, Anna Massey and Ron Moody.

The one-hour pilot of *Covington Cross* (previously titled *Charing Cross* — see TV Zone #30), receives its first ITV airing on 31st Aug. A full 12-part series for 1993 starring Nigel Terry, Cherie Lunghi, James Faulkner, Ione Skye and Jonathan Firth went into production in late July at Shepperton Studios and Allington Castle and continues until December.

The Big Breakfast, which takes over from *The Channel Four Daily* in September, includes a revival of *The Banana Splits*. The original half-hour shows are being re-edited for strip showing in five-minute segments.

Despite poor US ratings for its first series, George Lucas's *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* was renewed for a second series mainly because the feature films were so popular overseas that half the \$1.5 million per episode cost could be funded from foreign pre-sales. Lucas says, "I could probably make more money doing another *Indiana Jones* feature, but *Young Indy* is not the kind of idea that works in features, because it's so big and sprawling. Television lets me do it the way I want." Indeed other big names from the cinema such as Steven Spielberg, John Landis, Wes Craven and David Lynch are all looking at tv projects as they are given enormous creative freedom by the networks.

Shorts

The *Channel 4* 10 season at the MOMI in October includes an April 1985 episode of *Max Headroom* on 20th Oct as part of a selection titled *The Electronic Image*. The NFT is showing on film (not video) My

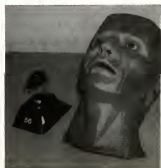
Friend Walter (13th Sept) and *Time Riders* (11th Oct) as part of a season of Thames's children's entertainment.

Tying in with the *Doctor Who* Exhibition at Bristol's Exploratory is a two day event at the Arncliffe Arts Centre (box office (0272) 299194) set for 31st Oct/1st Nov featuring Tom Baker (work permitting). William Russell has expressed interest in attending either this event or the one at the Gulbenkian Theatre, Canterbury (14/15th Nov). M & J Ventures are searching for another museum site for the winter and are drawing up plans for *Doctor Who's* 30th anniversary. They also have an option to present a Hammer Films exhibition at London's MOMI during 1993.

The BBC continues to sell off its costumes and props. The latest auction at Bonhams on 26th August includes items from *Red Dwarf*, *Doctor Who* (a Jon Pertwee 1973 velvet jacket expected to fetch £1,000, Sylvester McCoy's pocket watch, a Dalek from the second Amicus film valued up to £5,000 and a Cyberman), *Blake's 7* (Tarrant's jacket and Avon's silver shirt and leather jacket) and *Star Cops*. Current cut offerings on Sky One include *The Simpsons*, *The Outer Limits*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *The Flash* and *Lost in Space*. Expect ST:NG to commence in September.

Gerry Anderson gives a presentation on Supermarionation at the fifth BKSTS Film and Television Special Effects seminar at Pinewood Studios from October 23-25. On one of the evenings, the BBC Video Effects Department will provide a demonstration of their craft. The US cable station The Sci-Fi Channel premieres on 24th Sept to an estimated 10 million US homes with an unedited screening of *Star Wars*.

Red Dwarf's Kryten is just one of the items on sale at Bonhams Photo © AM Booth



Deep Space Nine

The pilot will be filming as you read this but, at the time of writing, the cast was to be finalized. The station commander is now named Sisko, not Cisko. The shape-shifting Science Officer is Odo. The Trill Science Officer is Jadzia Dax, the current host body is a female in her late twenties but the symbiotic creature itself is hundreds of years old and its last host body was male. The Ferengi barkeeper is called Quark and the doctor is named Julian Amoros. He is a young male human in his late twenties who has requested assignment to Deep Space Nine in the hopes of action and adventure! Unfortunately he finds that reality is somewhat different from his romanticised dreams.

Colin Meany has signed to appear as O'Brien, but no word yet about his on-screen wife Keiko. The series has been allotted three sound stages, the same as **The Next Generation** (meaning one fifth of the sound stages at Paramount are devoted to **Star Trek**). The new series boasts a large promenade set on the space station where the shops, bars and holosuites are situated. The station will house a large Ops Room, which incorporates much of the functions of a starship's bridge and engineering section.

As always, everything is subject to change; there has even been some discussion over whether or not to change the series' title!

UK Next Gen

September 7th sees the videos of the first six episodes of **Next Generation**'s fifth season. The rest of the season will follow. Plans are still flexible, but CIC are almost certain to drop the number of tapes to two a month so they can release Season Six directly after Season Five, possibly June '93. The covers for Season Five incorporate Ensign Ro and Wolf's son Alexander. A CIC spokesperson also indicated to *TVZone* that they wish to release **Star Trek: Deep Space Nine** as soon as possible after its January '93 US release. They have confirmed with Paramount that no specific episodes of **The Next Generation**'s fifth or sixth season need to be released first so as to maintain story continuity and they have very provisionally penciled in

Doctor Who at Bristol

The **Doctor Who** exhibition at Bristol's Exploratory opened for business on Saturday July 18th and will run to 1st Nov. Jon Pertwee was to attend the opening, but was ultimately unavailable.

The exhibition is well laid out, guiding the public through a set of TARDIS doors past Colin Baker and Peter Davison's costumes, into an open area containing a photo montage of companions and a looped video of all the different opening credits. Ian Scoones has recreated the Jagaroth spaceship from *City of Death* and there are several cases which attempt to explain TV special effects.

Through the TARDIS walls(!) is the costume section. A Sea Devil jostles for attention with an Ice Warrior, while the Keeper of Traken looks on. K9 stays aloof, facing the other way. Highlights include the Dalek and Cyberman sections. The former contains Davros, an Emperor Dalek, the Gunner Dalek and a cutaway Dalek with a voice ring modulator. The Cyberman section contains an almost complete set of heads.

There are also lectures hosted by local DWAS members. Admission is £3.75 for adults, £2.50



Above: **Doctor Who** monsters old and new

Below: A Cyberman trophy area

Photo © Rod Summers



for children. The Exploratory is open 7 days a week, 10.00 to 17.00 and the entry fee includes

admission to the rest of the Exploratory.

Rod Summers

April for the release of the pilot. The extended version of **Star Trek: The Undiscovered Country** hits rental stores up and down the country on September 17th 1992.

New British SF

Gerry Anderson's **Space Police** is developing along very different, and reportedly much better, lines than the pilot episode he produced shortly after **Terra-hawks**. Industry insiders are predicting that its debut next year will be one of the TV events of '93. Design work is being undertaken at the moment, with ten million dollars to spread over 13 episodes. The series is expected to begin filming early in '93. The starting date for the shooting of **Red Dwarf VI** is still not decided. Chris Barrie looks set to star in another **The Brittas Empire** and Craig Charles is involved with a US sitcom. The enforced break from production may be used to redesign most of the interior of **Red Dwarf**.

Zenith's **Dan Dare** is almost certainly on indefinite hold. No reason has been given, but the company are not moving forward at all with the proposed show and are communicating with no one about it.

New US SF

Fox TV is producing a pilot for a series based upon the film **Darkman**. Titled *The Choice*, Fox are designing it to be shown as a TV movie. ABC are producing Stephen King's **The Stand** as a mini-series, and have commissioned six episodes of **Deadly Games** which is about monsters transported from a video game into reality. Two pilots have been produced, each with a strong female lead. **Doors** is about a woman who can travel through parallel dimensions whilst **Running Delilah** is about a female cyborg who is a secret agent. It comes from Ron (*Beauty & the Beast*) Koslow, with the lead played by Kim Cattrall.

CBS pilots have a futuristic police feel as **Fast Forward** sees a modern day police officer cryogenically frozen until 2022 where he is teamed up with his son (both are physically the same age) to fight crime. **Space Rangers** is about interplanetary police on the beat.

NBC have dipped into classics, with **Journey to the Centre of the Earth**, **The Island** and **The Island of Doctor Moreau**. NBC have made a second attempt to resurrect **Knight Rider** with **Knight Rider 2010** and their final entry is the oft-reported **Red Dwarf**.

The **Magnum** story on **Quantum Leap** was a smoke screen for the Season Five opener. It seems that in a multi-part adventure Sam will leap into a body, possibly even Lee Harvey Oswald, who has the power to stop the Kennedy assassination. Is that what Sam is there to prevent? Rumours, seemingly without substance, are also suggesting Sam will leap into a cartoon character!!!



TV Zone Letters
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Video Releases

I K McLachlan

Stranraer, Wigtownshire
I was interested to read in *TV Zone* #33 that ITC Video have no immediate plans to release *Timeslip*. If you phone up the ITC Hotline (0898 333 482), there is an opportunity to vote on future releases. One of the possibilities is *Timeslip*. The trouble is that almost 15 minutes have passed before you vote. Your information on future BBC videos was, as usual, interesting. I'm pleased about the two possible *Out of the Unknowns*, however I am disappointed that there seems to be no sign of another *Adam Adamant Lives!*. I would have thought that telefantasy fans would want to see more episodes of this excellent series. I only hope that *Survivors* is a success because I would have thought that the market for this series was even smaller than the one for *Doomwatch* or *Adam Adamant Lives!*. I hope I am proved wrong, and that BBC Video decide to go back and finish the other two series as well! Now onto the 1993 *Doctor Who* releases. While I applaud the decision to put out at least one tape a month, I'm rather worried about the number of 'Specials'. I would have liked to have seen more stories. With it being the programme's 30th anniversary, I feel that it would have been nice to have slanted the videos towards the original *Doctor*. After all, with his rôle in *Coronation Street*, William Russell is quite a prominent actor at the moment! I only hope that items such as *The Sylvester McCoy Years* and the *Doctor Who Documentaries* (who really wants more clips from stories already out on video?) don't harm the *Doctor*'s long-term future on video. Anyway, keep up the good work. *TV Zone* is always an interesting read.

Editor: Now for some news from a reader...

More Davies

Russell T Davies
Manchester

A few months back, someone at work showed me an issue of your magazine, in which you were rather nice about me! (I wrote *Dark Season* for Children's BBC last year.) I must say that since then, I've kept up with your news columns, since they say more about what other channels are up to than any trade magazine! So — just thought I'd tell the news editors that I am writing another 6-part series for the BBC, again produced by Richard Callanan and directed by Colin Cant (replacing the proposed *Time of Terror* which you mentioned last issue). It's called *Century Falls*, though that's probably a working title. Again, it's Fantasy-based, the story of a mysterious village with no children... I would tell you more, but I haven't written the last episode yet! Hope that's of interest. Keep up the good work!
Editor: Last issue we asked about *The Georgian House*. Sue is just one of the readers who wrote in to tell us about it. Thanks to you all.

Georgian House

Sue Flower

Chesham, Bucks

The *Georgian House* was a museum visited by some children (2 or 3?). During their visit

they were transported back to the 1770's and befriended a young black house-slave. The main plot was based round the fact that Wilberforce's Act of Emancipation for British slaves was about to come into force. The master of the house was sending all his slaves to his West Indies plantation to stop them being freed. The young slave was naturally not keen to go and the children saved him by taking him back (forward?) to the 1970's and returning him after the Act had been passed. However, his master retaliated by throwing him onto the streets. I can't remember exactly how they saved him but it involved using 'magic', ie 20th Century technology.

I remember the series as being very enjoyable and interesting. Well worth another viewing... if only?

Thank you for your *Timeslip* features. Another 70's series I have fond memories of, if only for the fact that Granada's strike at the time meant watching some episodes twice (on Midland and then on Granada). I've been fortunate to see a couple of episodes in recent years and have been very impressed by the high standard, particularly dialogue and acting — something that tends to be lacking from a lot of 80's/90's children's drama. My only gripe is that Cheryl Burfield looks 10 going on 30!, or rather, acts 7 and looks 30.

Thank you for the continuing high standard of your magazine — only I wish you could find another name than 'cult' — it makes me feel I should be wear-

ing a khaftan and beads.

Editor: Not what I imagine when I hear the word 'cult'.

Wide of the Mark

Paul J Wood

Newcastle, Staffs

I feel that Richard Holdsworth, who appeared to enjoy a virtual monopoly when it came to reviews in issue 33, is somewhat wide of the mark in several of his opinions and statements. In issue 33 he does a very good demolition job on the BBC *Shada* video as well as putting forward various other views that do not stand up to scrutiny:

- The running gag in *Shada* concerning 'lumps' in the tea works extremely well. Everyone I know that has seen the video responds to the joke.
- Adams also had a hand in shaping the classic *City of Death*. Richard omits to credit him for this.
- Romana's line about being a 'Time Tot' is another charming gag that hits home.
- 'Alternative Betelgeuse' is more likely a take-off of the real-life travellers' guide *Alternative London* and not the *Hitch Hiker* reference that Richard assumes.
- The incidental music is neither 'brash' nor 'intrusive', but is a clever pastiche of Simpson's style of the time.
- David Brierley doesn't just voice the location sequences, he is also the voice aboard the 'Think Tank' station in episodes 1 and 4. Another fact that Richard forgets.
- The title sequences are *not* intact; they are *recreations*. The style of the lettering is not circa Season 17.

Add to all this that nowhere in his review does Richard make reference to the Script book. In my opinion, the book is a little gem and it seems stupid to me that Richard made no mention of it. As to his review of the Cybermen tape and 'Missing Stories' audios:

- Moonbase* better than *Tomb*? Really? I think not and I think 90% of fandom would agree with me.
- Why not dwell on the actual technical quality of the episodes on the tape? *Moonbase* part 2 suffers from a fluctuating sound-track and the print quality of part 4 is dreadful (a much better print exists).
- As regards the audios, the sound quality (considering their origins) is easily acceptable.

The *Georgian House* Ngo (Brinsley Forde) tries to work his magic with Abbie (Adrienne Byrne) and Dan (Spencer Banks). Ellis (Jack Watson) looks on

Photo © HTV West



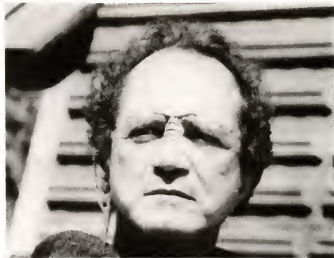
especially *Evil*. Try playing with your graphic equalizer. Richard... you'd be surprised what you can come up with! Editor: *Dangerous ground, Paul, speaking for all of fandom. It's very obvious from these pages that fans never agree about all things all of the time. There were some letters concerning the number of Richard's reviews. It was just the way things happened that issue. Richard could not have mentioned the Shada scripts as these were not supplied with the review copies. As for his Shada, well Douglas Adams did not seem too impressed about the story himself! Now for another view of The Next Generation.*

Boring Trek Aliens

Richard Greenaway
Swindon, Wilts
I doubt if I'm the only **The Next Generation** fan who is bored to tears with its inability to produce decent aliens. I sincerely doubt that across the infinite reaches of the Galaxy there are as many humanoid races as Paramount's scribes would lead us to believe. Maybe they don't think we've noticed. 'Just wrinkle her nose here and there *et voilà!*' Ensign Ro the perfect new 'alien' recruit for the Enterprise bridge! Let's learn some lessons from George Lucas! How about enlisting a Jawa or two?

Violence

James Miller
Kenilworth, Warks
I concur wholeheartedly with my colleague, Andrew Hobbs, and indeed the entire Federation, in condemning the senseless violence committed by the renegade Jenna Stannis, supposedly in the name of freedom. Let us hope that this convicted smuggler and abuser of leather boots will soon be brought to justice along with her entire security gang. However, Andrew's grim (and thoroughly researched!) catalogue of atrocities only serves to prove my point back in issue 31: Jenna, like all the women in *Blake's 7*, was a great anti-stereotype. The ensuing years have, unfortunately, seen the entertainment industry brimming anew with male violence against women, perhaps in a



Next Generation Does a wrinkled nose make an alien?

desperate attempt to turn the clock back. In all Jenna's fights, they started it, she won, and after a decade of stalk-and-slash movies that is a refreshing thing to see released on video. In fact, I think she carries more 'heroic-type action' than Blake, which was most unconventional for the time, even taking the main precedent (*The Avengers*) into account.

We had to wait until the appearance of Tasha Yar in **The Next Generation** to see another instance of this look-after-yourself ethic as various hunky aggressors collapsed in kick-boxed heaps, only to see the character disappear at an early stage again. Whether these trifles have any impact on the real world it is hard to say, but at least they counterbalance the influence of those tacky exploitative excesses in the cinema to some extent and that has to be healthy. Another small point while I'm here. Zoners; the recent compilation video **The Daleks' Greatest Hits** includes what is purported to be a trailer from the Sixties for the second Dalek story of **Doctor Who**. My contention is that this is a squalid fake, concocted by some shabby knave in the bowels of BBC Enterprises. Even if the pictures are a genuine trailer sequence, the voice-over has a distinctly suspicious aroma. One clue is that the shabby knave made the same mistake in an episode of the series, when Ace comes perilously close to seeing **Doctor Who** on television in 1963; the term 'Science Fiction' was not widely known to mainstream audiences until the late 70s. I was rather preoccupied with soiling my nappy in 1963, but my

feeling is that **Doctor Who** would have been trailed as 'mystery' or 'adventure' in those days, rather than Science Fiction. Can some 'yawn' older enlighten me? PS. Isn't it a shame Tasha left the Enterprise before the Borg attack? She would have re-routed their sub-routines and no mistake!

Wits End

Gary IJ Pollock
Grangemouth, Stirlingshire
It is now issue 33 and having read every issue so far, I decided it was time to put pen to paper. Firstly, I must say the magazine is perfect. It has a good balance of **Doctor Who**, **Star Trek** (Classic and TNG) as well as covering other cult series. My only complaint is that you read every page and the next thing you know you are at the Episode Guide. I would be willing to pay more, for more quality pages. Anyway, enough praise. What I want to know is how many people are at their wit's end waiting for the conclusion of *Redemption*. Is this CIC Video's idea of their own redemption? With *The Best of Both Worlds* you only had to wait the time it took you to load the tape into the machine. The fifth season looks to be even better than the fourth. Editor: Well, you won't have long to wait, Gary

Time Travel

Ian Duerden
Carno, Powys
Congratulations! I've been eagerly awaiting your *Time Travel Special* for six weeks and I've not been disappointed. Even

a flashback on my favourite **UFO** episode, the excellent *Timelash*. With 56 packed pages of informative material I can't complain about any missing shows. But can I nudge you to do a Fantasy Flashback in a future issue on Irwin Allen's failed attempt to resurrect the **Time Tunnel** in the 1970s with the pilot **The Time Travellers**. This 1975 tv movie promoted Sam Groom the original lab assistant to field operator, and co-starred him with Tom Hallick (an ex-astronaut who has the best line in the production, "Space is lonely, I became a Time traveller because that's where the people are"). Sadly, it ended up another lost opportunity.

As always, thanks for leading the field with in-depth articles.

Oz Trek

Helen Russell
Mooloolaba, Queensland
As an ardent fan of **ST:TNG** I was relieved to read from Steven Catarris from NSW, Australia (*TV Zone* #28) that it is now being shown there. I am due to move back there soon and I was worried as to how I would cope without it so I had rashly been buying Season 4 **ST:TNG** tapes to stock up! I have every episode up until the present showing, and will have to wait through 3 years of repeats in Oz, but it will be interesting to see if the episodes come under the same 'editing' as the Beeb gave them. Does anyone know of a **ST:TNG** or **Star Trek** fanclub in Oz — particularly Queensland? Love the mag: I look forward to it every month — is it possible to get interviews from any **ST:TNG** cast or is that only a rare opportunity? Keep up the good work — I'm taking all my copies of *TV Zone* with me to show the Aussies what they're missing out on!

Eire Trek

Alexander Alcock
Port Stewart, Co Londonderry
Some of our readers who are able to pick up RTE (the Irish television station) may be interested to know that season 4 of **Star Trek: The Next Generation** is currently being shown at around 7.10 on Saturday evenings. Editor: Well, that's all we've room for this issue. Keep writing all your excellent letters.

LOUISE JAMESON

Savage Memoirs



Louise Jameson's *Doctor Who* character, Leela, armed and ready to help the Doctor in BBC Video's *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*



HAVING played a companion in *Doctor Who*, it is unusual for a performer to be seen as capable of anything else, at least in the eyes of the public. Sadly, careers have often suffered as a result.

Louise Jameson is an exception to this rule; her television career alone has featured many strong female lead parts in series as diverse as *Tenko*, *Adrian Mole*, *Bergerac* and *Rides*. She has left her rôle as the fourth Doctor's savage companion, Leela, far behind her...

Louise Jameson joined RADA at the age of seventeen where she trained for two years after which she moved onto various repertory companies. This was followed by a Hammer Horror movie, the name of which the actress admits she has long since forgotten. After spending two years at the Royal Shakespeare Company her agent began pushing for her to do more television work and Louise was auditioned for several parts, including the rôle of Purdy in *The New Avengers*. Louise then appeared in minor rôles in *Emmerdale Farm*, *Play For Today: The Game*

Opposite page: Leela and the Doctor look for a giant rat in the BBC Video release *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*
Left: Louise Jameson and Tom Baker at the world's first ever *Doctor Who* convention in 1977

Photo © Stephen Payne



and Tom Brown's Schooldays before the part of Leela came up in **Doctor Who**.

Dark-Eyed Beauty

"[Director] Pennant Roberts viewed me and the audition was based on one of my first scenes as Leela," she recalls. "All they had for the character was her name — which meant 'dark eyed beauty', which is why I had to wear those uncomfortable contact lenses — the costume and a draft script. Both Pennant and I put in a lot of extra time to make the character work. I saw Leela as a mixture of naivety, innocence and untrained energy. I based her on the little girl that lived upstairs, who was then three and my dog 'Bozey', who was pure instinct and uneducated intelligence."

"I used to watch **Doctor Who** a lot, it was a Saturday family tea time ritual. We were such a busy family but we always came together at 5.25 on Saturday's to watch it, that was in the William Hartnell days. I trailed off watching when I was about fifteen but Patrick Troughton was my favourite Doctor; he was vulnerable but intelligent and strong. He also had what I would term 'Free Flow', an acting term, really taking off what is given to him from the characters around him. I feel that the other Doctors tend to act in isolation more — whereas Pat involved the other actors in what he was doing. I would really have loved to have worked with him."

A Bad Start

"My first photo session in the Leela costume was disastrous, with really awful make up. The girl who designed it was really sweet but it was a bad make up job and it looked bad on the photos. It looks like I have mud on my eyes!"

Tom Baker had made a formidable impression on the programme by this time; had Louise found any problems working with such an eccentric and large character? "He's one of the most extraordinary actors I've ever had the privilege of working with. I know Lis Sladen had a wonderful time working with him but he didn't really want my character in the show and some of that, I think, was off loaded on to me. He was exceedingly difficult to work with and would often attempt to have some of my lines cut — partly because he felt it was good for the show. He ate, lived and breathed **Doctor Who** and did a tremendous amount of work for charity which he never uses for his own personal publicity."

Louise also had to work with two very different producers during her time on the show, Philip Hinchcliffe and Graham

Williams. "Philip was very cool, but slightly distant, very efficient and very intelligent. Graham was much more amiable to suggestions, though I don't think he can be completely blamed for some of the 'fan' criticisms of his period. A lot of the suggestions would come from Tom."

Loves and Hates

Although only appearing in the show for one year, Louise appeared in nine stories and worked with numerous guest stars. "I loved K-9, I thought it gave Leela more scope and gave the show more humour. John Leeson was such a delight to work with and have around. I hated *Horror of Fang Rock*. Tom used to call the director Paddy Russell 'Sir'. The atmosphere was terrible making the story, which we had to record in Birmingham and it didn't quite work. *The Sun Makers* was my personal favourite because of the political content and because Robert Holmes was my favourite writer. He started writing with the characters and the character relationships and built the adventure around that and for that reason *Talons of Weng-Chiang* is my second favourite. I had to refuse to do the stunts in that story."

"My favourite monster was the invisible one we had in my first story [*Face of Evil*] — they were scary. I'm sorry I never actually got to work with the Daleks, al-



Louise Jameson as Susan Young in *Bergerac*

though writers do find them very difficult to script for."

That Doll!

Appearing as a **Doctor Who** companion had also meant Louise being involved in merchandising and becoming publicly recognized. There was, however, a downside: "That Leela doll! I did a four and a half hour photo session for the makers, just so that they could get the features right and it ended up looking like a black Sindy

Louise Jameson



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do!! My Mother stuck mine on top of the family Christmas tree instead of a fairy! Becoming publicly known at the time was quite worrying. I was chased by the Bristol rapist and only narrowly escaped but for a very long time afterwards I was afraid to go out alone in the dark. I think I escaped the companion typecasting trap though — after all there aren't many parts around for alien savages! I took one of my leotards with me when I left and the team gave me a rather beautiful knife with Leela inscribed on it, with the dates that I'd worked on the programme, as a farewell present.

"It's a shame that Leela ended up staying on Gallifrey the way she did; she's probably just bred and bred there. There's very little else to do! I would really have liked to have been written out dying whilst trying to save the Doctor's life."

Had Louise been tempted to rejoin the show for the anniversary special, *The Five Doctors*? "John Nathan Turner had asked me to return for one story to bridge the gap between Tom and Peter Davison. He summoned me to the BBC for lunch, which consisted of a slimline tonic and a packet of peanuts. I hadn't been into the BBC for ages and so I went swanning around saying 'Hello Darling' to everyone because you can never remember anyone's names. During this lunch someone tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Do you real-

ize that your dress is tucked into your knickers?' I had been swanning around with my bum hanging out! Anyway I turned John's offer down because I think it meant doing more than one story in the end and maybe because of that I wasn't asked back for *The Five Doctors*. Later on though I did watch some of Colin Baker's episodes, mainly because I know him quite well."

Psychics and Prison Camps

Following her stint in *Doctor Who*, Louise returned to the theatre followed by a rôle in the psychic/occult series *The Omega Factor* and long running parts in both *Tenko* and *Bergerac*. "I was quite sad that *Omega Factor* didn't really take off and ended after one series. The idea behind it was fine but the programme itself was badly organised, there were just too many writers working on the series."

"It was Pennent Roberts, who cast me for Leela, who offered me the rôle of Blanche in *Tenko*. It was a brilliant show to do and I'm still very close with some of the other actors. We meet up every so often and, in a strange way, it's almost as if we had been in a prison camp together — it's that feeling of a shared experience. I was glad of the regular work with *Bergerac* and on the whole enjoyed the show,

though I was never very happy with the scripts, or how some of the writers interpreted the rôle of Susan. I wanted her to be so much more than just *Bergerac*'s girlfriend and I had to fight for my character to have more involvement."

"The series *Rides* which I recently completed was devised by the same person who devised *Tenko*, Lavinia Warner, and it features a lot of strong central rôles for women which I'm very happy about."

Now in her forties, Louise Jameson has reached the stage where she can choose the work that really interests her, whether it is in television or theatre. "I've got two young children and *Bergerac* was wonderful because we could spend summers out on Jersey and winters back here. After that it was back to theatre for me but it didn't matter because I had a new man in my life who didn't mind being a house husband. Whatever my own personal views with work, I compromise more since I had my two boys as they've become my priority."

Whether her rôle is as mother or actress, Louise Jameson is, without doubt, a remarkable woman. But where, if it were possible, would she pilot her own *TARDIS*? "If I could travel anywhere in Time and Space? The only place I'd travel to is now — I love my life and this is the only place for me!"

Graeme Wood



DOCTOR WHO
The New Adventures:
Nightshade
 by Mark Gatiss
 Publisher: Virgin
 Price £3.99
 Published: 20th Aug '92

ALTHOUGH well-paced, with some excellent characters and dialogue, *Nightshade* is flawed by re-treading all too familiar *Doctor Who* territory. We have a secluded village cut off from the outside world, an ancient force wreaking havoc, a scientific research station, monks, a monastery and a cowardly reporter. The original ingredient is Edmund Trevithick, an ageing actor, once famous for the 1950s Science Fiction serial *Nightshade*.

This blatant pastiche of *Quatermass* is hugely entertaining, particularly when set within the *Who* format. It is during a repeat of *Nightshade* on tv that Trevithick finds elements of the show in real life.

The novel is set in the late 1960s, and Gatiss has included some absorbing

period detail. We have mention of the Czechoslovakia crisis, the Rolling Stones, Martin Luther King, Sharon Tate... There's also a lovely moment as Ace gets a 'personal handle' on Time travel, realizing that a young version of her mother exists in this era. Her character is used to examine the mystique of the Sixties as she decides that the decade is only fondly remembered because of post-war optimism. 'If they'd known what was coming, just how much fun would the Sixties have been?'

The writer certainly uses Ace well, as she confronts the ghosts of her past, falls in love and decides to remain behind. Unfortunately, the Doctor is dealt with less credibly; he wishes to become a hermit, feeling sudden remorse over his past actions. Gatiss drowns this in over-sentiment, then loses control of the character altogether as the Doctor breaks into tears at the sight of 'Susan'.

Nightshade is a pot-pourri of good and bad ideas; like a nightmarish *Field of Dreams* meets *Sapphire and Steel* within the framework of *Doctor Who*. It has some effective horror (Betty's death at the hands of her lost brother Alf is fairly gross) and a superb climax, but doesn't really break any new ground. And surely that was the whole aim of *The New Adventures*...

Richard Houldsworth

V: THE SERIES
Volume 1
 Warner Home Video
 Price: £10.99 each
 Released: 10th Aug '92

LIBERATION DAY tells of Diana's escape from her human captors on the eve of her trial for 'crimes against Humanity', only to fall foul of arch-villain Nathan Bates, before finally escaping to her fleet hidden behind the Moon.

The character of Nathan Bates is one of the series' best, continually playing the humans and Visitors against each other for his own gain. Diana, superbly played by Jane Badler, is still the strongest character, while the weakest are quick to be 'killed' off; the Visitor fifth-columnist Martin in this episode, and Robert Maxwell (no relation) in the second episode *Dreadnought*.

In *Dreadnought*, the Resistance reforms after another Visitor invasion (the Red Dust is no longer deadly to them), and foil the aliens' plans to destroy Los Angeles. Along the way, in a piece of scripting genius, the 8 year old Starchild transforms into a late teens version, ably charac-



terized by Jennifer Cooke, who provides the love interest. Diana's new second in command, Lydia, is also introduced, and the interplay between these two as they try to out-manoeuvre each other is delightful.

The third episode is *Breakout*, as Mike Donovan and Ham Tyler try to escape from a Visitor work camp with fellow prisoners Robin Maxwell (mother of the Starchild, Elizabeth) and Kyle Bates, Nathan's son. Filmed as an alternative to the following episode, it reveals the precarious position Julie holds as both a leader of the Resistance and an employee of Nathan Bates, as he searches for the Starchild to guarantee his son's safety.

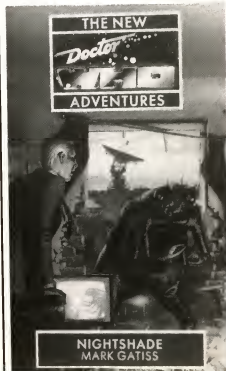
Volume Two

Deception re-introduces a softer Kyle Bates to the Resistance. Meanwhile, Diana has captured Donovan, and goes to extraordinary lengths to obtain the location of the Starchild, who she still believes to be a young girl. The conflicting relationships between Kyle and Elizabeth, and Kyle and Robin are introduced, adding much to this and subsequent episodes.

The Sanction follows Donovan's attempts to be reunited with his son, and Marc Singer is certainly allowed to develop his rôle as the 'muscle' of the series, tempered with compassion.

Tape Three

The Dissident is a weak episode. Diana cuts off LA with a force-shield, leaving the Resistance exposed. Much of the ac-



tion takes place on the Mother ship, and one becomes acutely aware that all the Visitors are in their human 'skins' — surely pointless, bearing in mind that the humans know what they look like. While the scripts remain interesting, this situation is bearable, but later it becomes unbelievable.

Visitor's Choice is the poorest of the episodes released, concerning a convention for Visitor commanders where Diana unveils the ultimate in food processors for their human prey. It is significant that this marks the start of the decline of the series, as the Resistance is turned into a type of private police force helping out elements of the community, as opposed to being a central, unified force to counteract the alien menace.

Colin Griffiths

BLAKE'S 7
Volume 21
BBC Video
Price £10.99
Released: August 92

POWER begins with Avon nipping off to use the natives as target practice for his new hand gun. This leaves Vila to test his lock picking skills on a sealed door separating the crew from the spaceship.

Unfortunately things don't go to plan, for the door is fitted with a nuclear charge which will activate as soon as Vila trips the lock. Worst still Avon, having stirred up the local populace, runs out of ammunition and ends up being grabbed by the Hommiks (Oo-er!).

This is Ben Steed's third and final script for the series and again he attempts to explore the psychological differences between men and women. These extremes are ably personified by Gun-Sar, the wife-beating, mud-wrestling, lager-lout chief of the Hommiks, and Pella, the beautiful but devious leader of the Seska. Soolin gets four lines in this story....

The next episode, *Traitor* was written by the late, great Robert Holmes, and deals with Avon and Co's growing concern over the Federation's sudden and rapid expansion. Dayna and Tarrant are dispatched to the planet Helotrix, the latest victim of Federation tyranny, in the hope of discovering the methods being employed to crush resistance. Before Tarrant leaves, Avon gives him a warning. "Whatever else is happening down there, even if they are executing the entire population, you are not to get involved."

Tarrant's response to this sound piece of advice is to get himself embroiled in a major war.

Robert Holmes's attempt to draw parallels between the Federation's own officer elite and those of the British Empire give rise to some very amusing dialogue which wouldn't be out of place in *Blackadder Goes Forth*. "Remember the Fletch expedition of '29? Fletch used gas against the Waazis. Complete massacre. Bodies everywhere. Took dinner with his officers that night and suddenly the Waazis came over the wall. Butchered the whole expedition." With a slice of sharpened mango no doubt!

If you spend your hard-earned cash on these episodes, you won't be disappointed. The same however cannot be said of the next tape.

Volume 22

In *Star Drive*, the crew of the Scorpio are told by Orac that if they don't get a decent propulsion unit for their ship, their renewed crusade against the Federation will come to a grinding halt. Luckily the Federation's own top drive specialist, Plaxton, has teamed up with a bunch of violent, sex-crazed psychopaths called the Space Rats!

Discovering this, Avon and crew set out for the planet Caspar, where the Space Rats' base is situated, in the hope of picking up a second hand drive unit for a knock-down price. However the Space Rats don't seem very keen on the deal, so Soolin gets to kill them all instead.

I'm not a particular fan of this episode, partly because the script, by James Follett, is ludicrous and partly because the Space Rats themselves have more than a passing

resemblance to the co-presenter of children's television, Edd the Duck.

And now we come to *Animals* by Allan Prior, which is considered by many to be the second-worst story ever, the worst being *Star Drive* of course. The story starts with Dayna and Tarrant travelling to Bucal 2 in the hope of contacting a research scientist called Justin, who looks rather disconcertingly like Norman Lamont. However, as Dayna teleports to the surface, the Scorpio comes under attack from the Federation. Tarrant does a runner and Dayna is left to face the creatures from Justin's genetic experiments...

Animals was originally written for Cally, but when Jan Chappell dropped out of series four, the episode was adapted to explore the dynamics of Dayna's character. This it successfully achieved, showing Dayna to be no more than an impressionable, immature, trigger-happy thicko, unable or unwilling to see through Justin's feeble attempts at self-justification.

That's my interpretation, and I hope I'm right, because if I'm not then Allan Prior actually believes the end justifies the means and that's very disturbing.

Alan Stevens

SAPPHIRE AND STEEL
Adventure 3
ITC Video
Price: £10.99
Released: August 92

SAPPHIRE AND STEEL are on the top of a building trying to find a way in. In to an invisible apartment, that is.

Inside, historians from the future are taking a look at our time, but — yes, there's a but — something has gone wrong. Communication with another research area in our time has stopped, and they cannot communicate with the Future. Add to that the disturbing events of anything with animal tissue in its construction beginning to echo the characteristics, or death, of that animal — a feather pillow becomes quite sinister.

The story sees a welcome return of Silver (David Collins), whose three appearances were an added bonus to the interactions between Sapphire and Steel. Here he provides even more of his expertise, and we are left with the knowledge that without him the other two could not have succeeded.

This is not one of the best *Sapphire and Steels*. It has the same slow pace as the other stories, but somehow it does not seem so mysterious, and therefore so intriguing and captivating. The previous story in the railway station was longer,





and after each episode the next was a 'must see'; not so with this story. But, 'not the best' is by no means bad, and this is certainly a tape worth buying.

James Phillips

THE CHAMPIONS
Two tapes
ITC Video
Price: £10.99 each
Released: August '92

NICHOLAS BRIGGS has already enthused about this series, and quite rightly so. These releases are still standing up well. As one who saw it first time round, I find it is quite a memory-jerker, particularly hearing the music again. It is so evocative of the many other series of the time. Great stuff.

The first video contains *The Interrogation* and *The Search*. The former is now one of my favourites. Craig finds himself locked in a room, with only an interrogator for occasional company. There are a few flash-backs to the first episode and events which took place before the episode. Colin Blakely excellently plays the interrogator in what is mainly an episode of the battle of wits between him and Craig.

The dialogue is extremely well written by Dennis Spooner, with very good direction and sound effects. Richard and Sharon make a couple of appearances, but this is Craig's episode. 'Compelling' is how I would describe this treat.

The Search, on the other hand is formula



stuff. Ex-Nazis steal an atomic sub with dastardly plans in mind — launching an atomic missile at London. Not an amazing episode, but the supporting cast is good and the whole thing quite watchable.

The second tape features *The Iron Man* and *The Dark Island*. The first is treated in a rather comic manner, with a deposed dictator being protected by our Champions posing as servants.

The Dark Island takes the Champions on a mission to find some disappearing agents. They soon find themselves having to stop World War Three. No problem of course, eventually...

All, as the saying goes, great fun, well made, and certainly worth buying if you like those series of the Sixties, and worth trying if you don't know what those series were like.

Jan Vincent-Rudzki

RANDALL & HOPKIRK (DECEASED)
Volume 4
ITC Video
Price: £10.99
Released: August '92

MORE tales of detective work from beyond the grave. In *For the Girl Who Has Everything*, Jeff is hired as a ghost hunter. The ghost turns out to be very real, or rather, turns out to be a real, live, person. We have the usual 'Can Marty find someone to help Jeff who's in trouble?' problem and the answer was obvious way, way earlier.

Never mind, the characters are, on the whole, quite credible, and its nice to come across someone else who can see Jeff. Perhaps the strangest part of the episode is the end, where someone nice is killed and it isn't worrying at all!

Not so enjoyable is the second story, *A Disturbing Case*. Marty ends up being committed, all too easily, and then we have a very silly routine where he is under hypnosis in the hospital. Talk about over-acting... Nevertheless, the episode is saved again by a good supporting cast.

Jan Vincent-Rudzki

EERIE, INDIANA
Vols 1, 2
Braveworld
Rental

THERE'S just enough space to take a quick look at this series making its debut in the UK. *Eerie, Indiana*, which has gone straight onto video in Britain, is described as 'America's strangest town', and that's very accurate.

The town, shaped like the Bermuda Triangle, has some very strange inhabitants, including Elvis and Bigfoot! Yet no one notices anything strange. Stories include *Foreverware*, where the preserving power of plastic containers is taken to an extreme, and *America's Scariest Home Video*, where the Mummy on tv becomes real. In *The Losers* a warehouse is discovered under the town, full of all the world's lost property. A very strange series, and well worth a visit.

Jan Vincent-Rudzki



Welcome to America's Strangest town.



Brent Spiner admires his alter-ego's poster in *The Official Star Trek: The Next Generation Poster Magazine*

This month we present the first part of an exclusive interview with Brent Spiner, conducted in London in June 92.

TVZone: Let's start off with your background; how you became an actor?

Spiner: I went to High School, where I had a teacher who was one of those Mr Chips-types and he made a huge dif-

ference in my life; his name was Cecil Pickett. It was quite a special school because not only was Mr Pickett an extraordinary teacher but the principal was instrumental in the theatre department being taken seriously. It was like being in a rep group because we could do anything we wanted with so much talent around. Our teacher knew how to identify talent

and nurture it, and that's basically what started me off.

When I graduated and went to college so did my teacher; he retired to a teaching position in a University and all his students went with him. After that I went to New York where I lived for twelve years and did a lot of off-Broadway, a lot of Broadway and a Stephen Sondheim musical and basically learned how to act and sing.

Brent Spiner as Dr Noonian Soong, Data's creator, in *Brothers*



TV Zone: What professional work did you do before *Star Trek*?

Spiner: The first television show I did was when I was still in Houston, Texas. I did a television movie, called *My Sweet Charlie*, which was the first television movie to win an Emmy; it was really excellent. I did a mini series in New York called *The Dane Curse*, and then I went to Los Angeles. That wasn't particularly to get into television, as I went with the play of *Little Shop of Horrors*, in which I played Seymour. I thought I needed to introduce myself to Hollywood as nobody knew me, because New York is incredibly provincial — you can be the star of the town, but nobody in Hollywood will have heard of you.

On the last day of the show a casting

Opposite page: Data, the artist, in Season Four's *In Theory*





A publicity shot taken at the very beginning of the series

director called Lynn Stallmaster, who is probably the king of the casting directors in Hollywood, came to see it and the next day I had two jobs. I stayed about two months, then went back to do a Broadway show, then did *The Three Musketeers* with Michael [Robin of Sherwood] Praed.

After that I went back to California and did a few guest performances on *Hill Street Blues* and *Cheers* and a few episodes of a comedy called *Night Chord*. While I was doing that I auditioned for *Star Trek*, and one thing led to another.

Auditioning for Data

TV Zone: What did your audition for Data consist of?

Spiner: I actually had eight auditions for *Star Trek*. Initially, they didn't know quite what they wanted, which is my favourite kind of audition. I like to take along my own ideas. The confusion was that they didn't know if they wanted someone who was going to be robotic or more human-esque. I decided very quickly that if it was robotic there was no way I could do it because we had to sign a six year contract. I knew that even if the audience didn't get bored with it, I would within two or three weeks. I tried to find some sort of middle ground where there was ac-

tually a character, and there was a hook in the script of the pilot where Data is compared to Pinocchio. In this case it was the machine who wanted to be human and so that was the direction I started to take it.

Finally it came down to me and one other actor, and I got a phone call asking me if I would be willing to change my appearance for the rôle, and I said, 'Sure'. I was thinking it would be false ears or something like that, and then they called and said, 'Actually, would you be willing to shave your head for this part?' I said no, and they said, 'Well this could be a deal-breaker'. The idea of shaving my head for six years really didn't appeal to me. I wasn't really sure whether I wanted to do it; it was just another audition for a job as far as I was concerned and there were other things I was auditioning for at the time that were equally as interesting. Also, the other guy who was up for the part was bald, and so I thought I had lost it.

However, Patrick Stewart hadn't been cast at that point, and he was cast a week later. Rather than have two bald characters, they decided that they just wanted to change the colour of Data's skin. I said I was willing to do that, but in retrospect I'm thinking it would have saved me a lot of time, because the make-up takes me an hour and fifteen minutes every morning, and it would probably take me about three or four minutes to shave my head!

Going for Gold

TV Zone: How was the make-up for Data chosen?

Spiner: We did thirty five make-up tests with different coloured hair and different coloured skin. I went from battleship grey

The classic meeting of Data and Lore



to bubblegum pink; I was every colour in the rainbow and I had white hair at one point — they tried everything. Finally they settled on something which is actually bright gold, but on most televisions it doesn't look gold. For the most part it looks either white or green.

Michael Westmore is the make-up man on the show. He creates every alien, and he's really one of the two or three real geniuses in the make-up business. I said to him, 'Why bother doing the gold every morning, why not just put white base on me and be done with it?' He says that there is a shiny effect that suggests metallic, and to him it's worth the time.

TV Zone: In retrospect, do you wish you had played Data any differently from the beginning?

Spiner: I don't think I would have played it differently, because it was a very clear journey that this character was going to take. In discussions with Gene Roddenberry there was a plan to take him from being almost machine-like to being almost human over the six years. I think we've done that; year by year he gets slightly more human than he was the year before. Finally, whenever it ends, he will be as close as it's possible to be to being human, but not. I might have had suggestions for how it might have been written differently, but that's really not my job. There's not really a great amount of interest in how I would like to see the character written.

Playing Lore

TV Zone: The episode *Data/Lore* introduced Data's evil twin, Lore. How did you approach playing him?

Spiner: Lore is so much easier to play than Data, because he is more like me. He is more like a human, but has a mainly negative side. Because we've only ever seen both Lore and Data side by side, it was like playing the two halves of myself. Also I grew up with an older brother, and typically we fought through our entire childhood, and so I was drawing from a lot of that and putting myself into my brother's shoes. All the resentment and anger he had for me I try and give Lore. There's a certain purity with Data, and there's a small palate on which to paint with him, because Data is not capable of certain things like anger and cruelty and all the things that I feel in my own life which I'm able to give to Lore.

Spiner Times Three

TV Zone: In season four's *Brothers* you



The angry android, Lore

got to play three different parts: Data, Lore and their creator, Dr Soong...

Spiner: That was easily the most difficult show we've done. Initially it was my idea to play Dr Soong. I mentioned to Rick Berman our producer, who also wrote the episode, that it made sense because Soong would have created Data in his own image. It gave it a reverberation of him not only being a parent to these creatures he's created, but also a god. Rick said, 'OK', even though they had actually spoken to an Asian actor called Key Luke, who has since died.

About a week before we were going to shoot it I completely panicked and thought that it was impossible for me to do. Literally, it was the make-up that made all the difference, and I credit Michael Westmore with at least 70% of that performance. Once it was on it could have been anyone in there, it was such brilliant work. As I sat in the chair and watched him apply the make-up, little by little the character came to me. There were many pieces of rubber on my face and as each piece went on I could see who he was — it was a case of the external giving you the internal.

TV Zone: How did the director shoot it, considering that in some scenes you appeared as all three characters?

Spiner: We would do a scene where I was Data, and we would have my stand-in, Tim McCormick, made up as Dr Soong and shot from behind. I didn't want Tim to do the line readings before I got to play the part, because he was a talented actor and his impulse would be to give it all he could. He was walking old, he was think-

ing old, and he would have performed it old, and I knew if I heard him talking I would be influenced by the way he was reading the lines. We had the script coordinator at the side reading his lines while he was moving his mouth for the jaw movement.

The next day I would be Dr Soong and Tim would be Data and we would turn it around and do the same thing. It took a very long time. We shot all of Data and Lore's scenes on the same day, and the Dr Soong scenes were done on other days because it was a four and a half hour make-up job.

TV Zone: Did the episode require any more studio time than normal?

Spiner: I think we had a day extra. It went way over budget, it took a long time because there was also a lot of motion control stuff in it where you see both Soong and Data or Soong and Lore in the same shot. There was a moment where Dr Soong took a pencil and ran it across Data's eyes and that took forever. I'd shot that first as Dr Soong, with an empty frame, and then I came in as Data with Dr Soong already on film. It took forever for us to work out exactly where the pencil would be and how fast my eyes would follow it. I have a wonderful still of Dr Soong holding Data's face, and both of them are me. The only thing that's not is the arm, which is coming from the bottom of the frame.

David Richardson & Stephen Payne

There's more from Brent Spiner in the *Starburst Star Trek Special* (out on 3rd September) and in next month's *TV Zone*.

THE QUESTOR TAPES

The Plot

Mister Darrow arrives at the top secret Project Questor laboratories where scientists are getting ready to try and bring an android to 'life'. The android has been assembled using components left by a highly gifted scientist, Professor Vaslovik, who disappeared without a trace several years earlier. The only man on Project Questor to have worked with Vaslovik is Jerry Robinson.

As the scientists seal the android's body casing, it begins to simulate breathing. They prepare to program it using a set of instructions that they themselves have written. Jerry objects saying that Professor Vaslovik's program tapes should be used and is proved right when the specially written material does not work. Vaslovik's tapes are used reluctantly and as Questor receives the programming he begins to go into spasms before lapsing into inactivity. Believing that their attempts have failed, the scientists leave. As they do, Questor opens his eyes.

Suspicious of Jerry's outbursts, Darrow begins to check into his background. He wonders whether Jerry knows more about Vaslovik's work than he is saying. In due course Darrow confronts Jerry and confines him to his quarters.

In the laboratory Questor begins to



Questor in the laboratory, about to wake up

mould his features so that he perfectly resembles a human being. Following this he breaks out of the laboratory and goes to the Vaslovik Archives in a nearby part of the laboratory complex. He begins to assimilate information since his data tapes were incomplete and he lacks much of the information to make him 'human'. He is observed by Vaslovik's former secretary, Alison Sample, and she asks him what he

is doing. In the conversation Questor makes it obvious that much of the information necessary to blend in and converse with humans was missing from the tape. When he tells Alison he is going on a journey to find his creator, she tells him he ought to take someone with him. Questor sees the logic in this and breaks into Jerry's room.

He tells Jerry who he is and that he wants his help. The two escape and drive for the airport. When Jerry resists Questor threaten violence but backs down and admits that he is programmed not to kill. Jerry finally agrees to go to London. On the plane the two talk about the morality of some of the things Questor has done in his search to find Vaslovik. Questor, however, is simply following a program that compels him to find his creator. He is

Jerry (Mike Farrell) and Questor (Robert Foxworth) on their quest to find



Darrow (John Vernon)





Jerry during the preparation of Questor

bugged by a memory of his creator and some kind of boat.

In London, Jerry and Questor are detained since they have no passports. Questor engineers an escape with ridiculous ease, but information has already been passed back to America that the pair are in London. A police search is organized for them. Jerry and Questor narrowly avoid capture by ducking into a hotel.

In order to gain money to finance the next stage of the search, Questor uses his superior analytical and sensory skills to win at craps. He even re-shapes a pair of loaded dice. Following this they take a taxi ride to the house where Questor's programming tells him to go and ask for 'C'. The house they arrive at belongs to the rich and powerful Lady Helena Alexander Trimbal. At first she pretends to know nothing about 'C' but offers them a bed for the night as Questor begins to spout information.

Baffled by why Lady Helena will not help when his programming states she should, Questor asks Jerry if he can arrange a romantic liaison with her so that she may open up a little! At dinner that evening Questor excuses himself so that Jerry can go to work on Lady Helena. Jerry cannot go through with it since he respects the lady of the house too much but he says enough to set her thinking. She goes to see Questor who replies with complete honesty about his plan when questioned. He then offers his own services since he is "fully functional". Eventually they settle on simple friendship in exchange for the information he requires.

The next morning the Butler wakes Jerry and informs him that the last time he saw Questor he was entering Lady Helena's suite. Jerry gets angry thinking that Questor has carried out the plan that he could not. A bemused Lady Helena takes Jerry to the wine cellar and operates a switch to a secret underground room. Jerry is astounded, since in there Questor is linked into every world government and place of importance in world affairs. He can summon information as and when he

wants it on anything he desires. As Jerry watches, Questor considers a tricky problem concerning a famine.

Unnerved by the power Questor has at his fingers, Jerry secretly calls Darrow and gives him their location. Unknown to Jerry, Questor records a farewell message to him. Unable to locate Vaslovik his programming demands that he remove himself from all life so that he can self-destruct. He will turn into a nuclear bomb in three days and laments the lost opportunity to learn about Mankind.

When Jerry is looking for Questor later, the Butler informs him that he has gone. Meanwhile, Darrow and his troops are closing in. Questor has stopped for a while in a children's playground and sees a wooden ark that the children play on. The connection with boats is made and he remembers that Vaslovik can be found on Mount Arrarat where Noah's Ark came to rest. Jerry catches up with him and so does Darrow and his men. In an escape attempt Questor is shot and very badly injured.

He is returned to Project Questor in America. Alone in the laboratory Questor and Jerry talk, Questor helps Jerry fix his damaged circuits. Their conversation and friendship is observed by Darrow who watches via a security camera. He goes and talks to Questor for the first time and Questor reveals that he wants to be human.

Darrow wants Jerry to place a radio transmitter inside Questor so they can track him back to Vaslovik and after some argument Jerry finally agrees. After completing the repairs, Jerry and Questor set off for Arrarat in a private jet. They are followed by Darrow and troops surround



Dr Bradley (Majel Barrett), one of the five-nation team of scientists

the mountain. With twenty-nine minutes to Questor's detonation, they find the entrance and go inside.

Inside the mountain, Questor receives The Truth and meets Vaslovik: the previous android. Dozens of other androids lie inert, each one having constructed the next just before they ceased to function. Vaslovik tells Questor he is here to protect Mankind, but never to interfere. Since Questor's programming was incomplete, he asks Jerry to guide him in what it means to be human.

Darrow has heard all of this from the cavern entrance and he warns Questor of the troops. He then takes the radio transmitter, which Questor has removed, and leaves. He tells the troops outside that Questor has escaped in the aeroplane and he should be tracked via transmitter and destroyed. Darrow himself then drives to the jet and takes off. The air force destroy Darrow thinking he is Questor.

Darrow's sacrifice has allowed Jerry and Questor to escape. They can now begin the task of guiding Mankind out of its 'childhood'.

Questor in the "C" room



Credits

Questor..... Robert Foxworth
Jerry Robinson..... Mike Farrell
Darrow..... John Vernon
Lady Helena Alexandre Trimbal
..... Dana Wynter
Dr Bradley..... Majel Barret
Allison Sample..... Ellen Weston

Produced..... Howie Horowitz
Teleplay..... Gene Roddenberry
..... Gene L Coon
Story..... Gene Roddenberry
Directed..... Richard A Colla
Music..... Gil Melle
Costumes..... Grady Hunt
A Universal Production

Background

The mid-Seventies saw Gene Roddenberry make a concerted attempt to sell a television show which was not *Star Trek*. His first attempt was *Genesis II* which CBS nearly went with but ultimately dropped. His second was *The Questor Tapes* for network NBC.

With this show Roddenberry created one of his most interesting non-human



Lady Helena encounters Questor

characters. Questor is a terrific character which could have been used to great dramatic advantage. The sympathy the audience feels for him is increased greatly by the excellent performance given by Robert Foxworth.

The measure of affection Roddenberry must have had for Questor is evidenced by the fact he all but resurrected the character as Data in *The Next Generation*. The two share slight differences in background and nature but essentially they are the same. The idea of an 'operative' helping Mankind can also be seen in the sneaky Roddenberry pilot *Assignment: Earth* made in *Star Trek*'s second season.

Helping with scripting duties on the pilot is Gene L Coon, who worked on *Star*



Vaslovik is finally found

Trek, and while the plot is somewhat fluid the whole piece does move forward with deliberate pace and intention. Richard A Colla competently directs and would go on to helm episodes of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Something Is Out There* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

NBC originally liked the idea, but in order for them to go ahead with a series they wanted many format changes. Too many for Roddenberry, who felt they would taint his vision and remove the fun from the project. He refused to go with the changes and *The Questor Tapes* died. The pilot is available, however, from video rental stores.

Stuart Clark

Photo research: Mark French

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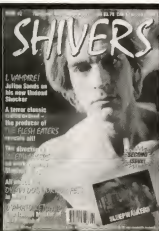
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Gerry Anderson and Christopher Burr celebrate the arrival of Terrahawks

FOLLOWING on from his point, last issue, about delivering a show within its budget, Gerry Anderson continues to give insights into his career and his forthright views on the film and television industry. "If you keep on schedule, that does tend to mean that all the money's going up on screen. If you drop behind schedule, you've got a lot of departments that start working three-quarters time [higher rates of pay], like cutting rooms, dubbing, editing, set building and so on. And then of course the costs go up, and if costs go up the money goes down the drain instead of on the screen."

"And if you care about what you're producing, you really want to get the last ounce of the money on the screen and not waste it. It's not really an accountancy approach that made me like that, it's just that I wanted to achieve as much as possible on the screen — and that meant very, very tight budgetary control."

Total Involvement

Was it this that necessitated his being involved in every level of production?

"I answer this very, very carefully. We

had some 200 people on the payroll. We had some very, very clever people, and no, I didn't invent everything, and no, I didn't do everything. But in terms of either controlling people or inspiring people — which is extremely important in my view... I mean the difference between an inspired film unit and a unit that's just flogging along is the difference between a

wonderful series and a very ordinary series — I really was involved in everything.

"I believed that everything was important, so I would involve myself in everything. I mean, just everything... from the initial storyline conference, to meticulously reading the scripts — even though we had script editors, I would

The first season of *Space: 1999* was Gerry Anderson's favourite

Photo © ITC



Opposite page: *Space: 1999* Maya was not popular with Gerry Anderson, and Martin Landau did not ensure US network exposure

Photo © ITC

finally go through it myself — visiting the floor to do a sort of 'Well done' and 'What a great shot', which is all part of keeping enthusiasm up..."

Video Assist

One part of Gerry's work was the invention of the 'Video Assist' technique for film-making, whereby a video camera is mounted with the film camera so that others on the set can see on a monitor what is being shot. It was a development from using mirrors for the puppeteers to what their puppets were doing!

"When they were in the gantry overhead and I was directing, I would look through the camera and I would say, 'Okay, Torchy look to his right, and get him to look at the girl on the swing'. And of course all the puppeteer could see was the top of the puppet's head. If the puppet had a parting, for instance, I would tell them when it was looking at the character, and the puppeteers would take a sight line [using the parting]. Of course, characters were looking past each other... And one day, somebody came in with an industrial video camera and demonstrated it, and I suddenly thought, you know, 'What a marvellous idea'."

The camera was set up to look through the film camera's viewfinder, so the puppeteers could see the results of their labours, giving the characters accurate eyelines.

Voices & Scripts

From puppets to voices... "This was something I always, always used to direct myself. We used to pre-record the dialogue and play it back on the floor over speakers, and the puppeteers would mime their puppets to the voice. Our scripts were very, very detailed. They would say 'Cut to close-up Tex Tucker' and he would speak a line, 'Cut to two-shot' two more lines, 'Cut to wide angle'... I mean they were literally cut actually in the scripts, because it was so painstaking getting the shot. In live action you do a whole scene in long-shot, then you start knocking off all the close-ups. We had to just shoot the bit required.

"I knew the scripts very, very well. When we recorded the dialogue, I was able to say, 'The aircraft is flying out of control. You've got to be shouting over the engine noise'... and so on. So in terms of projecting the voice, expressing the right degree of excitement and so on, I had to direct them. Otherwise when the films were finished, people would be saying things in conversational tone, and the other guy is sixty feet away, or chatting in



UFO Gerry Anderson with Peter Gorden and Ed Bishop Photo © ITC

a crashing aircraft to screaming engines and explosions. I directed meticulously every single picture we ever made."

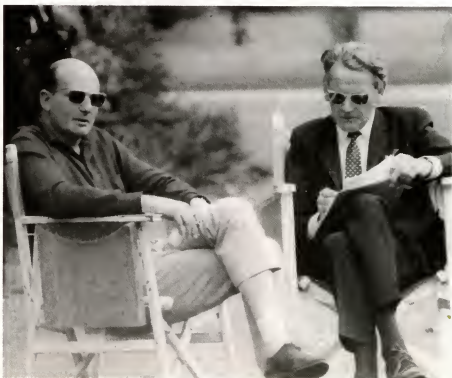
Puppet Faces

What about the appearance of the puppets? Their facial characteristics... Were they based on particular people?

"I mean, you get an awful lot of codswallop spoken about these things. People sort of imagine things over the years. I mean, our puppets — and I don't say this in a derogatory sense — our puppets were... the girls were wonderful look-

ing... the guys were *tremendously* handsome. We had a lot of clever girls and guys who used to sculpt the heads. And so they would come into a meeting. You're going to create a new character... You say, 'We want a really good-looking guy, athletic, a sense of fun in his face. One of these guys who always has a smile regardless of what's happening'. Sooner or later, somebody in the meeting will say, 'You mean, something like James Garner?'. You say, 'Yeah, that sort of thing.' Now the puppeteers might have gone away and that might have influenced them. They might have actually got Spotlight [the actors]

UFO Executive Producer Gerry Anderson and Producer Reg Hill Photo © ITC



directory] and turned the pages and actually copied a face. But in general I'm sure most of the puppets were just copied from other faces, possibly just members of the unit."

The next step was the casting...

"You have a clay head which has been painted, so you can make some kind of a judgement. And you now hold auditions. You go around with a head and show them all. In life you get the most peculiar voices from people that you don't expect to get. A big burly bloke with a squeaky voice, a tiny bloke with a gravel voice... So you can get some surprising results. It really was just a question of listening and, for whatever reason, saying, 'That sounds good'. But I'm sure that if Scott Tracy had had a Scottish accent, it would have been just as successful. Who's to say?"

Booze'n'Drugs

Was it a relief or just a change to leave puppets behind and work with 'live' actors on **UFO** and **Space 1999**.

"I had mixed feelings about it. It was lovely to move into a real film studio with big sounds stages and big sets. But then you are suddenly confronted with booze, drugs, people not turning up, and people being smashed out of their minds when you're trying to shoot. Questions like, 'What is my motivation? Why have you given me a yellow telephone? Is there some special significance to this?'. It got to the point where I very quickly thought, 'I don't know. Six of one and half a dozen of the other!'"

UFO 1999

Gerry's lecture briefly touches on the transformation from **UFO** to **Space 1999**. Here he elaborates:

"We had to do a lot of redesigning and a lot of redevelopment. In principle, we did start to remake **UFO** and we did switch it to a new series. We were actually making another **UFO**. We certainly had a script. The design departments were all drawing up the new craft, the new Moonbase and all the rest of it, and then the brakes were put on. It was going to be revamped in terms of taking it one stage further. It wasn't going to be a different show. The Moonbase was now going to be very much larger. I mean, the Moonbase on **Space 1999**, the exterior, was already designed as the **UFO** base. Then it suddenly occurred to me, 'Nobody's seen this. How would they possibly know?'. But of course there was a huge amount of redesigning and an awful lot of upheaval... and the whole thing was very disruptive, but it did save the show."

Gerry has some mixed feelings about **Space 1999**: "Bearing in mind the legal position of slander, let me express this very carefully. We were told by the New York office — I'm not referring to any specific person — that we must get Martin Landau and Barbara Bain, because if we got them, that would mean network [nationwide screening] instantly. Well we got them, and we didn't get network. The New York office having recommended that if we had these two people we would get network, Lew [Grade] made this huge investment. Of course, they weren't big enough to take the blame themselves, so they had to put the blame somewhere else. They had a lot of power, because they were distributing in the biggest territory in the world. And then when it came to the next series, they introduced the new member of the cast. They had this bloody silly idea of Maya turning into different creatures. I mean if we could have done it with 'morphing' [a state-of-the-art transformation computer effect] fine, but that wasn't possible at the time. The scripts became very juvenile. For me — I mean, I've met people who prefer the second series — but for me the first series was infinitely better, and the second series was down-graded and almost 'comic cuts'."

During these times, had Gerry every thought, 'Why don't I do **Thunderbirds** again'? He laughs, "All the time..."

He goes on to explain that the series belongs to ITC America, speculating that they might bring **Thunderbirds** back as, possibly, a live-action movie. But Gerry stresses that this is not an informed insight.

Negative/Positive

Asked about the positive things he's learned over the years, Gerry confesses it's easier to relate the negative aspects. After some thought, he says, "If we're talking about a perfect world, I would like to, probably, eliminate 97% of the people who control stations, who make this false claim that they understand what the public want... I think the decisions about what should be made should be in the hands of the film-makers and not the broadcasters."

"Obviously there are broadcasters who do know what the public want," he adds, diplomatically.

As for his best memory of **Thunderbirds**, the series for which he is largely remembered by the largest number of people? "Probably when I took the pilot film to Lew Grade. When the lights went up and his reaction to that... That was probably the best moment."

Nicholas Briggs



Gerry Anderson, the man behind *The Secret Service*
Photo: Michael Wright

Secret Service Videos

September sees the ITC Video release of that sometimes forgotten Anderson supermarionation curiosity piece, **The Secret Service**. A charming blend of real location work, featuring real actors, and the customary high standard of Century 21 models and puppetry.

Here's your chance to catch up with Father Unwin (played with lashings of gobsmaking gobbledegook by Stanley Unwin) and his peculiar brand of gentle espionage. Courtesy of ITC Video, we have fifteen sets of two tapes to give away — that's Volume One (*A Case for the Bishop* and *A Question of Miracles*) and Volume Two (*The Feathered Spies*, *Last Train to Buffers Halt* and *A Hole in One*). All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning is answer the following questions... no strings attached!

- 1) Following **The Secret Service**, what was the next fully-fledged Anderson tv production?
- 2) Who composed the music for **The Secret Service** and most of the other Anderson series?
- 3) What did Father Unwin keep in his briefcase?

Answers on a postcard to:
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TERRY NATION'S

BLAKE'S 7 Part Two

WHEN *Blake's 7* returned for its third series, fans of the programme soon found out that major changes had taken place. Gareth Thomas, who played the title character, had moved on to other projects, as had Sally (Jenna) Knyvette, and Brian Croucher's character Travis had been killed off in the season-ending *Star One*. For Terry Nation, the creator of the series, it was time to bring in new characters to fill the gap.

New Arrivals

The first of the new arrivals was Steven Pacey (see interview in *TV Zone* 28) as Del Tarrant, a brash young fighter pilot, intended as a replacement for Blake. "In Tarrant," Nation explains, "I was looking for someone like the Spitfire pilots of World War II, who were young and didn't know the meaning of fear. They took those planes up against six hundred German bombers, because they were young men filled with life, ambition, excitement; perhaps the feeling of immortality. I wanted him to be a daredevil — dangerously daredevil, in fact."

The other new crew member was Dayna Mellanby, played by Josette Simon, a fledgling actress just out of drama school. As Nation points out, Simon was an inspired, and lucky, bit of casting. "Dayna was the weapons expert," he explains, "I thought it would be interesting to have a girl who was aggressive, to have somebody who would kill first and ask questions later, and it was nice to give what were generally masculine attitudes to a woman. It was not my idea to cast her black. It was David Maloney's, and very right I think; a very good idea. She was a little inexperienced, but turned out to be very good."

"I think that's what you look for — you hunt around, asking yourself, 'Who's going to make the match once you get them back on the ship? How are they going to function? Why are they here?'

You don't really know until you've gone a little further. If they don't work, you can dump them. We're going into a battle together, and that one's going to be killed. It was the nature of the show."

Destroying the Liberator

Nation wrote the first two episodes of season three, but did not return to the programme until *Terminal*, the final story. Like *Star One*, it also featured a memorable cliffhanger: the Liberator is destroyed, leaving the rebels stranded on a planet with no means of escape. Since Nation was unsure if *Blake's 7* would be picked up for a fourth series, did he deliberately end his story on an ambiguous note? "Yes, very much so. We were also losing a character when we lost the ship, because the Liberator had a voice and a personality."

"I was fascinated with the idea of cancer in a machine. I suppose I wanted to

give the machine the same vulnerability as a man, and so when this rot started to go through the ship, it was a fascinating idea that I wanted to do. It never bothered me very much about where you could find your next story. If that story worked, then there's a way out, so you can always write into the next situation. I can't honestly remember what the progression was, but undoubtedly there was a point where we would be reassembling, reviewing what we'd got, looking at it again, and knowing that the Liberator was gone. It was very moving. I actually missed that episode on its original transmission, because I was already in the United States."

Season Four

Terminal was Terry Nation's final story for *Blake's 7*. By the time the show was picked up for its fourth and final series, he was in America, where he had hoped to find work. At this point, his involvement in the show was minimal. "We had a new producer, who came out to see me. He spoke with great enthusiasm, and again they talked about the kind of progression we wanted. It was one day in Hollywood, that's all we had. I was already working for Columbia, and I had not been able to give it as much thought as I had wanted. I came up with some ideas about the way we wanted to progress, but I was six thousand miles away, and it was up to them."

Nation is outspoken in his opinion of the fourth series, which in terms of look and style was drastically different from the episodes that preceded it. "I didn't like it," he states flatly. "I think they lost direction, and I think the writers were tacky. I think there was a lot of tacky writing, but what can I say? I should have been responsible."

Is Nation's criticism due to his not liking the stories themselves, or was it a touch of regret at not being more involved? "I'll tell you what it was: nobody cared anymore. I've also said this about recent editions of *Doctor Who* — nobody loved

Dayna strikes a typical aggressive pose



it. They were all bored with **Blake's 7**, and didn't want to go on with it. I honestly believe that you've got to care about something very much to want to go on with it; you've really got to love it. The script editor couldn't love that show like me. It was my show; I was the one getting the credit on it. It was *'Terry Nation's Blake's 7'*, and he was one of the people who worked on it. I think when he came on to his own show [*Star Cops*] later on, he understood that you've got to believe in your own show. Nobody else is going to do that for you."

The End...

As for the now-infamous final episode in which his characters are seemingly killed off by the Federation, Nation admit that it still annoys him sometimes. "It got very ugly, because they really had no right to do that, and there were even mutterings by my agent over suing. I did admire enormously the dramatic moments of Avon standing over Blake's body and raising the weapon and starting to smile, which I think was sensational but dumb. They were really dumb to do it. I killed off the Daleks remember, and what a dumb thing that was to do, so I learned that lesson, and it should have applied to this."

...and a Beginning?

Although several years have passed since the final episode, a Science Fiction convention or interview rarely goes by where Nation isn't asked about the possibility of a sequel. While it's too early to talk about **Blake's 7: The Next Generation**, the writer has been kicking around ideas for a follow-up for some time. "Avon is alive and is sitting on an island on a planet; a little like Napoleon on Elba. It's been seven years (the magical 'seven' you see) and he has been as good as gold. He makes television broadcasts across the Universe, saying how wrong Blake was, and as for the Federation, he's gone their way entirely it seems, but once in a while, he's been hearing reports that there's a guy somewhere who's a tiny thorn in the side of the Federation. He's out on the rim galaxies, and our guy is going to turn. He's going to stop being passive, and we're going to be a group again."

In his sequel, Nation restores the balance of the original cast, by creating a new 'Blake' to counteract the single-minded Avon of the later stories. "Avon has to have someone to work against. It is no good making Avon the leader, because he is not that figure, although he would like to be. I think Paul (Darrow) would like to be, but he is not that figure. He is



Avon, waiting for **Blake's 7: The Next Generation?** From BBC Video's *Blake's 7*

better in conflict with somebody, so I would need a Blake substitute somewhere who is not Blake, but provides some of the same things."

As for bringing back the rest of his characters, Nation is slyly close-mouthed. "I would love to bring Michael Keating back as Vila, which I think I can. Avon, certainly. Beyond that, I'm not sure."

Before **Blake's 7** fans start running out to buy blank video tapes for a revival of their favourite series, Nation confesses that his sequel idea is currently far behind on the back burner. "Nothing has been happening, although I'll never say never again. I'm not waiting to get back to the typewriter tomorrow morning on it."

As for whether or not the recent interest in the show may prompt the BBC into bringing it back, Nation is not holding his breath. "I've said about them being a

wonderful organisation to work for in many areas, but they can also be so un-business-like that they would ignore it. **Points of View** got more letters for **Blake** than any other series, so there is a demand. If anyone will listen, then terrific. I mean, I'm ready to go with it, and we'll give it to them, but I have no idea. The BBC doesn't talk to me, I don't talk to them, not for any other motive than we just don't talk together. They're a long way away."

Blake's Appeal

When asked to explain the series' continuing popularity, more than ten years after the airing of the final episode, Nation is unable to come up with a simple answer, pointing out that part of its appeal was the ability to grow and develop. "I thought I had the makings of a Space series," he begins, "that any story I wanted to do could now fit in. I had a group of renegades, and I could do an adventure story every week where they got involved with something. I also had to give the Federation a face, and arms and legs and a body, so I had Travis and Servalan representing them. Once I had my pursuit set up, I had my heavies going, then I could do one plot a week without too much trouble. The trouble was that the characters kept growing, kept enlarging upon themselves, and started taking on newer, occasionally moral dimensions, so that screwed things up a little bit. What set out to be a good, rousing adventure yarn started turning into something different."

"If you grew up when I did, it was simple to read stories about Robin Hood, and Robin Hood was the good guy, Prince John was the bad guy; very simple. Okay, so the world has gone on, and now there

Dayna (Josette Simon) and Tarrant (Steven Pacey), Season Three's new arrivals From BBC Video's *Blake's 7*



are Arab terrorists who believe they are patriots of their country, there is the IRA, there are bodies all over the world that claim not to be terrorists, but honourable patriots, doing what they have to for their country. Suddenly my little show was no longer Robin Hood. We were terrorists fighting against the organised form of government, so new dimensions started appearing, new thoughts were coming into my mind, and that's how the show developed."

As for whether or not **Blake's 7** could ever be revived in the past **Terminator 2** world of elaborate special effects, Terry Nation maintains that his show would have no problem. "I can't and they can't begin to match George Lucas or any of the other people who have done such wonderful special effects. I would go much more for character, and conflict, and for the kind of morality of being outlaws. We've all said it at conventions that the special effects at the BBC is a guy shaking the



Blake (Gareth Thomas) returned for the final episode, but Terry Nation disapproved of the "dumb ending" Photo courtesy Marvel UK

scenery, so I don't want to do that. As long as I can have a few shots of a spaceship in flight that I can cut to, and then get back

to the people, that's what I would want to do."

Joe Nazzaro

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B13 Another Mother

Teleplay Deborah Pratt
 Director Joe Scanlan
 Kevin Buckner (Michael Stoyanov), Susan Buckner (Olivia Burnett), Teresa Buckner (Troian Bellisario), Jackie Arnett (Allison Barron), Teddy (Andrew Held), Ox (Larrou Tate), David (Kevin Telles), Paul (Eric Welch), Stick (Terrence Evans), Lemule (Michael Kemmerling), Rafaella (Alina Ceval), Linda (Molly Meeker)

Date: September 30, 1981. Sam is a divorced mother trying to keep above water with one of her children who keeps getting into trouble and runs away.

B14 All Americans

Teleplay Paul Brown
 Director & Donald P Bellasario
 Director John Cullum
 Chuey Martinez (Richard Coca), Celia Martinez (Ruth Britt), Manuel Vega (Pepe Serna), Ruben de Guerra (Fausto Bara), Coach (Robert Benedetti), Otto (Otto Coelho), Carla (Marie Caldare), Maria (Christie Alvarez), Eddie (Corey Smith), Hal (Ralph Monaco)

Date: November 6, 1962. A high-school quarterback, Sam is trying to stop his best friend, a real football expert, from throwing the championship game.

B15 Her Charm

Story by Paul M Belous,
 ... Robert Wolterstorff, Deborah Pratt
 Teleplay & Donald P Bellasario
 Director Deborah Pratt
 Director & Donald P Bellasario
 Director Chris Welch
 Dana Barrenger (Teri Austin), Nick Kochifos (John Snyder), Richardson (Stanley Brock), Andy (Rene Assa), Thomas (John Shepherd), Prof. Sebastian LoNigro (James Hardie), Peter Langley (Mark Harigan)

Date: September 26, 1973. Sam is an FBI agent guarding a woman who is to turn State evidence on her ex-boss, a big time drug dealer who plans her death.

B16 Freedom

Teleplay Chris Ruppenthal

Director Alan Levi
 Joseph Whitehorse (Frank Sotomora Salcedo), Sheriff Taggart (Leon Rippey), Suzanne Whitehorse (Gloria Hayes), Deputy Hallitt (Tom Everett), George Whitehorse (Jim Jaimes), Proprietor (Ed Hooks)

Date: November 22, 1970. An American Indian, Sam tries to find a way to take his dying grandfather out of a nursing home and back to the reservation to die.

B17 Good Night, Dear Heart

Teleplay Paul Brown
 Director Chris Welch
 Roger Truesdale (William Cain), Stephanie Heywood (Marcia Cross), Greg Truesdale (Robert Duncan McNeil), Sheriff Lyle Roundtree (W K Stratton), Aggie (Deborah Strang), Hilla (Suzanne Tegan), Groundskeeper (Hal Borak), Melvin Spooner (Mervyn Brinkett)

Date: November 9, 1957. Sam, Massachusetts mortician, is obsessed with proving a teenage immigrant didn't commit suicide. He's sure she was murdered!

B18 Pool Hall Blues

Teleplay Randy Holland
 Director Joe Napolitano
 Violet (Shari Headley), Eddie Davies (J W Smith), Jimmy Grady (Teddy Wilson), 'The Brush' (Ken Force), Charles Griffin (Robert Gossett), Lester Brown (Alton Blair Carter), Magic (Robert 'Rags' Woods), Annie Waterman (Miss White)

Date: September 4, 1954. Sam slips into the body of an ageing black pool hustler who must beat a loan shark or jeopardize his granddaughter's honour and future.

B19 Leaping Without a Net

Teleplay Tommy Thompson
 Director Chris Welch
 Eva Pancini (Fabiana Udenio), Laszlo Pancini (Jan Triska), Clifford Vargas (Richard Riehle), Benny Skyler (Jan Eddy), Big Moe (Phil Fondacaro), Ringmaster (Christopher Atkeier), Sybil the Gypsy Woman (Roya Megret), Victor Pancini (Ted Nordblum), Stripper (Vivian Paxton), Carmenia (Maria Lauren)

Date: November 18, 1958. Part of a circus highwire act, Sam must save his sister from a fatal accident, while coping with a moody father who holds Sam responsible for his mother's death.

B20 Maybe Baby

Teleplay ... Paul Brown & Julie Brown
 Director Michael Zinberg
 Bunny O'Hare (Julie Brown), Reed Dalton

(Charles Frank), Sheriff Barnes (Jimmie Ray Weeks), Deputy Sutton (Travis McKenna), Montero (Garrett Pearson), Big Bob (Ray Young), Maggie Egau (Margaret Cole), Fanner (Caruen Filpi), Leon (Byrne Offutt), Madeleine (Eve Brenner), Buster (Jay Boryea) Christy (Cathy McAuley)

Date: March 11, 1963. Sam finds himself caught up with a stripper who is trying to get a baby daughter across the State line, where the mother is waiting...

B21 Sea Bride

Teleplay Deborah Pratt
 Director Joe Napolitano
 Catherine Farlington (Beverly Leech), Weathers Farlington (John Heitzler), Vincent Loggia (James Harper), Marian Farlington (Patricia Harty), Jennifer Farlington (Juliet Sorrey), Tony (Tony Maggio), Alfonso (Louis Guss), Head Steward (Ralph Brannen), Captain Sheffield (Kurt Knudson), Carlo Monte (Rick Bauche), Phillip Duonot (Kent Phillips)

Date: June 3, 1954. Sam's a debonair globe-trotter on a cruise liner. He discovers that his glamorous ex-wife is about to marry a Shakespeare-quoting mobster.

B22 M.I.A.

Teleplay Donald P Bellasario
 Director Michael Zinberg
 Skaggs (Jason Beghe), Beth Calavici (Susan Diod), Dirk Simon (Norman Large), Tequila (Pat Skipper), Boner (William Shockley), Carol (Sierra Pecheur), Rosalie (Lettitia Vasquez), Sgt Riley (Dan Ziskie)

Date: April 1, 1969. Sam is an undercover woman cop with a partner who is being chased by two vengeful crooks. However, Al is trying to involve Sam in a separate adventure concerning a nurse about to remarry, believing her husband has been killed in Vietnam.

Mark Chappell

Children problems for a divorced woman in *Another Mother*



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